



# NEWS RELEASE

## PRESS OFFICE

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### ***SBA ADMINISTRATOR BARRETO URGES SMALL BUSINESSES TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT BUSH'S TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY INITIATIVE***

**EL PASO, Texas** –Administrator Hector V. Barreto of the U.S. Small Business Administration today told participants at the El Paso Regional Trade Forum that the President's Trade Promotion Authority initiative, like the President's tax reform, is critical to the growth and prosperity of America's small businesses.

**"TPA is important,"** said Barreto. **"It is important to America and it is important to the hard working small business men and women in New Mexico and Texas. Just as we have supported President Bush in tax reform, we must take our stand with him as we bring forth an era of free trade."**

Legislation establishing TPA has been introduced in both the House and the Senate. It would allow Congress to vote on trade agreements negotiated by the President on a straight-up-or-down basis, without amendments. In return for Congress foregoing amendments, the President would consult with congressional committees throughout the negotiations.

**"TPA will bring a free, fair and open market,"** Barreto said. **"It will tear down the barriers existing between small business and the world marketplace, allowing small businesses to compete on a level playing field."**

Barreto commented during a daylong trade forum sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce.

His appearance came during the second day of a three-day tour of New Mexico and west Texas. Barreto was in Albuquerque, N.M. Wednesday with President Bush to celebrate the grand opening of a job training and entrepreneurial development center. Earlier today Barreto held a breakfast meeting with members of the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to recognize them for their hard work and successful partnership with the SBA to certify 19 small businesses for federal HUBZone contracting opportunities.

At noon the administrator addressed attendees at the Fourth Annual Women's Business Conference, congratulating them on public-private partnerships with lenders and the business community that have helped women start new businesses. Barreto also met with the SBA's Small Business Advisory Council and Rep. Silvestre Reyes (D-Texas), chairman of the Hispanic Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives, to discuss local needs for greater access to business start-up capital.

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Later Barreto toured the SBA's One Stop Capital Shop and Small Business Development Center, housed in a former factory that was reopened to provide lending and business start-up support.

Barreto will be in Albuquerque Friday for a Small Business Community Summit Conference, the first of several such events he plans to hold around the country with local community, civic and business leaders. **“As President Bush’s advocate for small business, I want to listen to America’s small business owners so that I can report to him, with confidence, that the SBA is meeting the needs of the small business community,”** he said.

Administrator Barreto will hold a press conference with local, regional and national media at noon.

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*For more information about SBA's programs for small businesses, visit the SBA's Web Site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) or call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA or TDD 704-344-6640.*